



# Maricopa County Animal Care & Control



## *READING YOUR CAT'S BODY LANGUAGE*

### **THE TALE OF THE TAIL...**

- ♥ When the tail is flying high:  
"all is terrific."
- ♥ When it is at half-mast:  
"all is not terrific."
- ♥ When it is dropped low:  
"I'm very unhappy."
- ♥ When it twitches back and forth:  
"back off."
- ♥ When the tip twitches:  
"I'm self conscious."
- ♥ When it's bushy:  
"I'm angry!"

### **THE EAR STORY...**

- ♥ Ears alert/straight up:  
"Ready for fun or affection."
- ♥ Ears flat out sideways:  
"What's up?"
- ♥ Ears downward:  
"I'm defensive. Watch out!"
- ♥ Ears down and back:  
"I'm furious. Watch out!"

### **LISTEN TO MY PAWS...**

- ♥ Paw kneading:  
"I'm content."
- ♥ Paw strokes, Paw hugs:  
"I love you."
- ♥ Paw nagging:  
"Hurry up!"
- ♥ Paw blows:  
"A fight!"

### **THE EYES SAY IT...**

- ♥ Eyes wide open and looking at you:  
"I'm listening."
- ♥ Eyes half closed:  
"I'm sleepy."
- ♥ Eye pupils in slits:  
"I'm feeling alert and confident."
- ♥ Bug-eyed:  
"I'm frightened."...so be careful!
- ♥ Blinking and winking:  
"I'm talking to you, I like you."
- ♥ Eyes clouded:  
"I'm ill. "Or, "I'm relaxed."
- ♥ Eyes staring:  
"Stay away." A stare is a challenge.

For more information on animal care, behavior or AC&C  
programs contact (602) 506-PETS or visit [pets.maricopa.gov](http://pets.maricopa.gov)  
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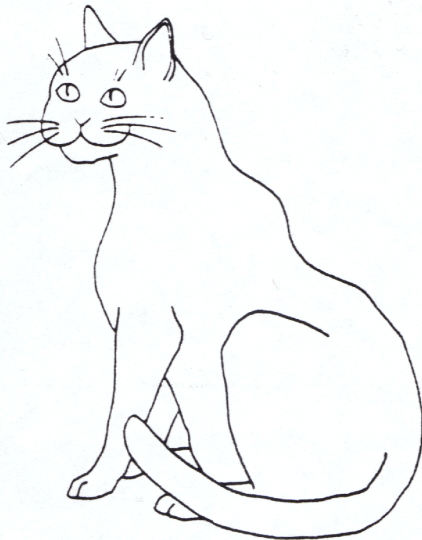
## FELINE BODY LANGUAGE

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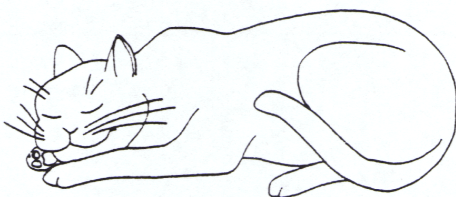
*A cat's tail and ears can tell you a lot about how he feels. The following diagrams will help you to interpret a cat's mood.*

# CONTENT

His relaxed face and erect ears  
let you know that he is  
comfortable and trusting.



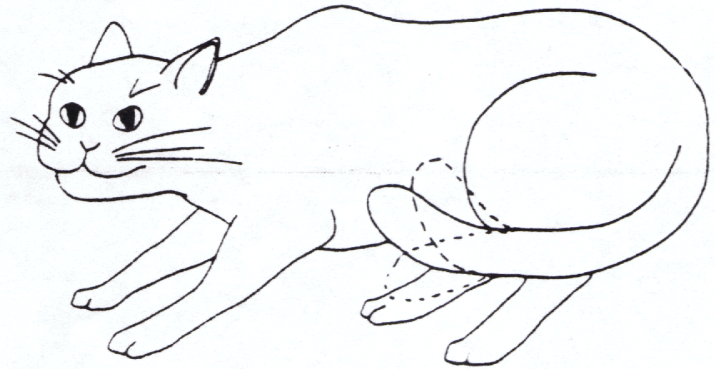
"I'm happy."



"ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ"

**CAT NAP**

Did you know that a cat must trust you completely before he will sleep in front of you?



"This looks like fun!"

## PLAYFUL

His dilated, or wide-open eyes, and swishing tail tell you that he is ready to pounce.



"Don't touch me!"

## AGGRESSION

His ears are pointed back. His eyes are fully dilated. He is ready to defend himself.